

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

OMB-01 /058 W

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R 201000Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4379

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MANILA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 0309

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AS, SN

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER PAYS BRIEF VISIT TO SINGAPORE

1. AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER FRASER MADE A BRIEF ONE-DAY STOP-OVER IN SINGAPORE JANUARY 17-18 ON HIS WAY BACK TO CANBERRA FOLLOWING HIS ATTENDANCE AT THE FUNERAL OF MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER RAZAK. DEPUTY AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER BUTLER TOLD CHARGE THAT IN VIEW OF IMPROMPTU NATURE OF VISIT, IT HAD BEEN DECIDED BEFORE FRAXER'S ARRIVAL THAT THERE WOULD BE ONLY A GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND THAT NO BILATERAL AUSTRALIAN/SINGAPORE PROBLEMS WOULD BE DISCUSSED. FRAZER MET ALONE WITH PRIME MINISTER LEE FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS WHILE FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK MET SEPARATELY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM ACCOMPANIED BY THEIR RESPECTIVE AIDES.

2. BUTLER SAID THAT THE HIGH COMMISSION HAD NOT YET RECEIVED ANY DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE LEE/FRASER DISCUSSION.

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HOWEVER, TWO POINTS WERE WORTH NOTING. FIRST, IN CONTRAST TO THE LEE/

WHITLAM RELATIONSHIP WHICH HAD BEEN MARKED BY RATHER STRONG DIFFERENCES IN VIEWPOINT AND OCCASIONAL PERSONAL ANTAGONISM, FRASER AND LEE HIT IT OFF WELL AND THEIR DISCUSSION HAD OPENED THE PIPELINE FOR FUTURE CONVERSATIONS AND VISITS. SECONDLY, FRASER HAD USED THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS AUSTRALIA'S COMPLETE SUPPORT FOR INCREASED ASEAN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION. ALTHOUGH THIS WAS HARDLY ORIGINAL, LEE RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO THIS EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK MEETING WITH RAJARATNAM TOUCHED ON A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS BUT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION OF TIMOR.

4. BUTLER SAID THAT BEFORE RAZAK'S DEATH, CANBERRA HAD ALREADY BEEN CONSIDERING A VISIT BY PRIME MINISTER FRASER TO SINGAPORE. THE IMPROMPTU VISIT WHICH HAD JUST OCCURRED WAS NOT REGARDED BY EITHER PARTY AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR A MORE CAREFULLY PREPARED VISIT. THEREFORE, BUTLER ASSUMED THAT THERE WOULD BE ANOTHER MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS IN DUE COURSE.

5. ALTHOUGH FRASER FLEW DIRECTLY BACK TO CANBERRA, FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK REMAINED IN SINGAPORE ANOTHER DAY AND FLEW TO JAKARTA ON THE 19TH FOR TALKS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK. BUTLER SAID PEACOCK WAS RATHER APPREHENSIVE ABOUT HIS VISIT TO JAKARTA IN VIEW OF THE "DREADFUL LEAK" IN CANBERRA OF AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR WALCOTT'S TELEGRAM FROM JAKARTA CONTAINING AN EXTENSIVE ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE POLICY TOWARD INDONESIA. BUTLER SAID HE HAD READ WALCOTT'S MESSAGE AND THAT THE EXCERPTS QUOTED IN THE PRESS HAD BEEN COMPLETELY ACCURATE. PEACOCK WAS CONCERNED THAT HE WOULD FACE DIFFICULT QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND THAT THE LEAK, COMING AT A TIME WHEN AUSTRALIA'S POLICY TOWARDS INDONESIA WAS STILL BEING FORMULATED, MIGHT COMPLICATE HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH MALIK.
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